

September 27, 2012

Michigan House of Representatives
Health Policy Committee
Representative Gail Haines, Chair

RE: Testimony to the House Health Policy Committee on House Bill 5934

Good morning Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee. Thank you very much for allowing us to stand before you to share our concern and seek your assistance.

My name is Federico Mariona. I am a practicing physician, an obstetrician-gynecologist by primary training and a former president of the Michigan Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. This is the national organization that groups all board certified physicians that care for women's health. As a maternal fetal medicine subspecialist I chair the maternal and perinatal health care committee of the Michigan State Medical Society. We center our efforts in the health of women planning to get pregnant or during the course of their pregnancies. I practice and teach in Wayne county and the city of Detroit and environs for over 30 years.

Sexually transmitted infections commonly known as gonorrhea and chlamydia, just to name two, are a primary cause of **infertility, poor pregnancy outcomes including preterm birth, a large contributor to fetal, neonatal and infant mortality**, issues that are included in the governor's dashboard in efforts to improve the health of the state's population.

When in the course of our practice we identify a woman with a sexually transmitted infection and its potential consequences, our goal is to treat her rapidly and effectively and, just as important, to protect her from reinfection. **That demands that her sexual partner is also treated expeditiously and effectively.**

The woman's partner, most times, is not known to us and is not our patient. Similarly, a physician treating an infected male cannot treat his partner unless **she** is his or her patient. In Michigan **it is illegal for us to issue a prescription** for the partner in order to protect our patient. Michigan is one of a handful of states in our country that has such legislative barrier for the proper treatment of an affected couple.

We are asking our legislators to assist us in improving the health of the public by removing this barrier and change the law. We must be allowed to **expeditiously treat our affected patient's partner (EPT)** and be able to prescribe the necessary medication without fear of repercussions. This policy is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Bar Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

As the elected representatives for all of us, your willingness to change the current law will provide the critical step that will be of immense help to your constituents, our patients, is cost effective, and most importantly, is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your attention.

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